

Fair Assessment Policy Statement

Introduction

Portland Training and its partners aim to provide fair assessment for all learners on qualification based programmes. Assessment practice will be open and consistent within the codes of practice and regulations laid down by the relevant awarding bodies.

All assessments must be conducted rigorously and accurately and, where appropriate, in accordance with the awarding bodies published criteria and standards.

Assessment evidence will be judged according to the principles of VARCS:

- **Validity** - evidence must be suitable to the syllabus/standards it is addressing and less than two years old. Previously attained certificates in support of your competency must also fall into this timeframe and be explained by you as to how they link to the current qualification being undertaken.
- **Authenticity** - evidence must reflect your knowledge, skills and understanding. The work of another person must not be submitted as your own. Other sources may be used as long as you appropriately reference these.
- **Relevant** – evidence should be appropriate and relevant to the syllabus/standards it is addressing.
- **Currency** – evidence should show that you are competent now.
- **Sufficiency** – evidence must show consistent performance to the required level over a period of time

The chosen format and method of assessment must be appropriate to the qualification/unit of competence, and any conditions specified by the awarding body. Assessment materials must be presented in clear and unambiguous language and must differentiate only on the basis of your knowledge, skills and understanding. Such materials must be free from any overt or covert discrimination against any individual either in wording or content. You will be assessed in the same manner against the same standards and will not be discriminated against or treated more harshly or more leniently than any other learners.

As part of the induction process some learners may be required to undertake an initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills. This will be used to inform decisions about any additional support which may be offered to you in the early stages of your course which will improve your skills in these areas.

Internal Assessment

Portland Training will only appoint teaching and assessment staff whose knowledge, skills and understanding are appropriate for the programmes they teach and assess. Staff will maintain their competence by regular staff development activities organised internally or externally.

Assessment must be available to all those who have the potential to achieve the standards required for a particular qualification. However, some learners may need access to alternative means of providing evidence. Such assessment methods must balance the need of the learner against the requirements of

the awarding bodies, and care must be taken to ensure that any proposed assessment methods are of equal quality and rigour to those for mainstream learners in order to demonstrate that the learner has achieved the national standards.

Learners may be identified as having particular requirements in relation to, for example, learning difficulties, a visual, hearing or physical impairment, a mental illness, or English as a second language. This means that they will need appropriate guidance and/or support in their development to help them meet the required standards such as:

- Help with communication
- Adapted physical environment
- Information technology
- Confidence building

Portland Training will appoint staff qualified to support learners in these circumstances, and/or advise the learner on how to obtain additional help before they embark on their qualification. For example a learner who has English as a second language may find an external ESOL course is a more appropriate first step.

Following all assessments, written or oral feedback must be given to you as soon as possible. Feedback should be as helpful as possible to you, confirming what has gone well and giving clear guidance on what you need to do in order to improve on your performance.

Assessment will be internally verified in accordance with Portland Training's procedures. Formative verification will take place twice if time allows and must be conducted by reference to the awarding body national standards covering the required skills, knowledge and understanding. Portland Training's Internal Verification strategies will be used at all internal verification interventions to ensure quality, consistency and fairness, and these strategies will be reviewed annually. Summative assessment will only take place when the assessment process is complete in accordance with awarding body requirements and as deemed complete by the assessment staff.

External Assessment

External assessment will be administered strictly in accordance with instructions issued by the relevant awarding bodies. Learners may be selected for interview by External Verifiers to ensure that consistent fair practice is being used by Portland Training's assessment staff.

Portland Training's Appeals and Complaints Procedure

Your assessor will provide you with help and advice with regard to the requirements of your award. This may take the form of giving you assignments and/or activities to check your understanding. The training that you receive from Portland Training will be individually planned to suit your needs.

We hope that all feedback given to you will be constructive and clear and will encourage you to complete the work for your award as effectively as possible.

If you are not happy with any aspect of your programme we will do our best to help you deal with the issue. This may mean talking to your assessor on your behalf to help overcome the problem.

Your assessor will do their best to support you, however we do appreciate that there may be times that issues arise that you would prefer not to discuss with your assessor.

If for any reason you disagree with a decision made by your assessor you have the right to appeal that decision. How to do this is written below.

What you can do if you don't agree with your Assessor's decision

If you feel that you have been unfairly treated or you do not agree with an assessment decision that has been made you should follow the procedure below:

- You should express your concerns directly to your assessor, stating what the problem is so that the assessor can explain their decision to you.
- If an agreement cannot be reached, you can arrange to discuss the issue with your Internal Quality Assurer.
- If an agreement cannot be reached at this stage you should contact the Quality Manager in order to reach an agreement.

If the disagreement cannot be resolved at this stage the awarding body appeals procedure should be followed.